E C P C

Early Childhood Personnel Center

Models of Coordination at a Systems Level to Promote Integrated Early Childhood Professional Development for Personnel Working with Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers with Disabilities

Literature Synthesis 3

IDEAs that Work

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LITERATURE REVIEW

The search for studies of models of coordination for professional development was conducted using generally accepted and recommended procedures for conducting systematic literature reviews (e.g., Cooper, Hedges, & Valentine, 2009; Cooper, 1998; What Works Clearinghouse, 2011, 2014). This included, but was not limited to, the use of both controlled vocabulary and natural language search terms, multiple search sources, *a priori* criteria for determining if studies meet established standards, and the coding of relevant study characteristics for subsequent analyses (Lucas & Cutspec, 2007; Wilson, 2009).

SEARCH TERMS

The search terms used to identify studies included, but were not limited to, the following in different combinations: *model* OR *paradigm* OR *framework* AND *system* OR *program* AND *integrat** OR *coordinat** OR *organizat** AND *professional development* OR *technical assistance* OR *training* AND *personnel* OR *staff* OR *students* OR *practitioner* OR *teacher* OR *therapist* AND *preschool special education* OR *early childhood special education* OR *early intervention* AND *infant* OR *toddler* OR *preschool** AND *disability* OR *developmental delay* (plus more than 50 specific disability-specific terms) AND *research* OR *evaluation* OR *investigat** OR *study*. Additional search terms listed as keywords in located journal articles were also used to supplement the primary terms.

SEARCH SOURCES

ERIC, PsychInfo, MEDLINE, EconLit, Scopus, World Cat, Dissertation Abstracts, Education Research Complete, and Academic Search Premiere were searched for studies. These were supplemented by Google Scholar, Ingenta Connect, and Google searches as well as a search of an EndNote library maintained by our Institution. Hand searches of the reference sections of all retrieved journal articles, book chapters, books, dissertations, conference presentations, and unpublished papers were examined to locate additional studies. We also systematically searched relevant journals (e.g., Sheridan, Edwards, Marvin, & Knoche, 2009), book chapters (Powell, Diamond, & Cockburn, 2013), and books (e.g., Kagan & Kauerz, 2012; Winton, McCollum, & Catlett, 2008) for studies.

SEARCH RESULTS

No randomized controlled trials nor any quasi-experimental comparison group design studies that met the *What Works Clearinghouse* standards for strong or moderate evidence were located for either preservice or inservice professional development systems (What Works Clearinghouse, 2011, 2014). This was likely the case because studies of programs or practices using *systems* as the unit of analysis for effectiveness investigations would be extremely difficult to conduct and would likely be cost prohibitive.

The largest number of relevant reports that were identified included descriptions of what experts consider the elements of effective professional development systems (e.g., Copley, 2004; Helterbran & Fennimore, 2004; Kagan & Kauerz, 2012), studies of specific professional development practices (e.g., Snell, Forston, Stanton-Chapman, & Walker, 2013; Yoon, Duncan,

Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007), and a few case studies or case descriptions of efforts to improve professional development systems (e.g., Kipnis, Whitebook, Austin, & Sakai, 2013; Shaha, Lewis, O'Donnell, & Brown, 2004). In cases where research was cited as the basis for claims or hypotheses about effective professional development systems, the evidence was mostly from studies that did not involve evaluations of systems change or were case descriptions (e.g., Apple & McMullen, 2007; Winton et al., 2008).

As is often the case in the type of literature search that was conducted, certain patterns emerged that suggested fruitful lines of investigation for further literature reviews. For example, some of the key elements of effective professional development systems have been investigated as lines-of-research in their own right, and systematic reviews of that research would help identify which key elements do and do not have an evidence base (e.g., Sheridan et al., 2009; Snyder et al., 2012; Zaslow et al., 2010).

Another pattern that emerged from the literature search was the identification of relevant studies in other disciplines that could inform identification of the characteristics of effective models of professional development systems coordination (e.g., Bridges, Davidson, Odegard, Maki, & Tomkowiak, 2011; Lloyd & Abrahamson, 1979) and the identification of both effective preservice and inservice professional development practices (e.g., Hillier, Civetta, & Pridham, 2010; Mansouri & Lockyer, 2007). Systematic investigation and review of this research would likely prove informative.

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